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AUTHOR Kapoor, Suraj; Smith, Ralph
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ABSTRACT

To determine the role of communication channels, particularly mass media, in the socialization of foreign college students, a study was devised whereby foreign students from three central Illinois universities responded to a 27-item questionniare on American values. The questionnaire called for agree/disagree responses on such topics as the individual's perception of American values, channels of mass and interpersonal communication, credible sources of information, and social pressures (if any) that influenced conformity to American values. Analysis of the questionnaire data indicated the following: mass media, particularly television and books, played a significant role in foreign students' perceptions of American values; foreign students who regarded their friends as credible sources of information perceived American values more accurately; television (a mass media channel) and teachers (an interpersonal channel) were the major internalizing forces; and direct contact with American friends contributed to a positive image of America, while isolation from American contacts resulted in negative evaluations of the country. (MAI)

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The Role of Communication

In Acculturation of Foreign Students

Faculty Paper for Presentation at

AEJ Convention 1978

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Suraj Kapoor
Ralph Smith
Illinois State University
Normal, Illinois 61761

CS204674

Abstract

This investigation sought to single out the role of communication channels in general, and mass communication cues in particular, in the acculturation of foreign students. Some of the questions the researchers attempted to find answers to indluded: (a) How do foreign students come to perceive American values? (b) What are the channels of mass, as well as interpersonal communication that enable them to first perceive and later conform to American values? (c) Which, for foreign students, are the credible sources of information concerning Americans and American society? (d) Are there any social pressures (or inducements) brought to bear upon foreign students to first perceive and then conform to American values?

Foreign students at three central Illinois universities were the subjects for the study. Their responses to a questionnaire were computed to perform regression analysis and to measure the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables.

Some of the conclusions this study reached are: (a) mass media channels, particularly TV and books, play a significant role in enabling foreign students to perceive American values. Radio and stereo music listening, on the other hand, contribute negatively to such perceptions; (b) foreign students who see their American friends as credible sources of information also perceive American values more accurately; (c) television as one of the mass media channels, and teachers as one of the interpersonal channels, emerge as major internalizing forces; (d) concerning

negative or positive perceptions of Americans, direct contact with American friends contributed to a positive image of the host nation, and isolation resulted in the inculcation of the negative.

The Role of Communication in the Acculturation of Foreign Students

Introduction

In the last 25 years, several million students received their advanced academic education in institutions of higher learning located in countries other than their own. A substantial percentage of these persons chose to stydy in the United States. In 1974-75 alone, some 216,000 students from around the world enrolled in U.S. universities and colleges as regular undergraduates or graduate students.[1]

During their stay in the United States these students pursue, as appropriate, specialized courses intended to equip them for a professional, social and personal competence of their own choice or that of their organization and society. At the same time, "the individuals are involved in the daily life and events of their temporary host society, and, thus, unavoidably are exposed to varying consonant and divergent conceptions of societal values; or individual roles, rights, and responsibilities; of institutions and their functioning; of equality and authority; of opportunity and standards; and of differing modes of interpersonal communication."[2]

Previous Research

Considerable interest has been exhibited in finding out what happens to foreign students while they are studying in the U.S. Spaulding, et al., report that 160 empirical and 44 non-empirical studies, most of

which were published after 1967, focused on this area.[3] Nearly one-fourth of these studies concentrated on foreign student attitudes and problems of social adjustment. The topics that attracted the attention of researchers investigating attitudes included: (a) foreign student attitudes toward self, career, and home country; (b) African attitudes toward the United States and toward American Blacks; (c) social behavior and adjustment to life in the United States; and (d) attitudes toward the United States, other countries, and students of other nationalities.

Concerning foreign student attitudes toward self, career, and home country, researchers (Coelho, Gandhi, Becker, Markham, Heise) found that foreign students in the United States for up to two or three years seemingly change their basic culture and religious attitudes very little.[4] They appear to move toward greater open mindedness and toward placing greater value on knowledge, and those from countries with constraints in relationships between men and women have an increased desire for greater freedom.

Investigations concerning African attitudes toward the United States and toward American Blacks (Becker, Miller, Sofola, U.S. Information Agency) support the notion that Black Africans do not strongly identify with Black Americans, but the studies are inconclusive as to whether the general direction of attitude change during the sojourn is positive or negative.[5]

Studies focusing on the social behavior of foreign students and their relationships with Americans (Tanner, Antler, Becker) show that

foreign students from western industrialized countries tend to socialize more than do students from non-western and less industrialized countries, thus documenting the phenomenon of social isolation.[6]

Results of studies relating to attitudes of foreign students toward the United States, other countries, and students of other nationalities would seem to indicate: (1) marked changes in attitude toward the U.S. immediately after students arrive and less change later (Clements); (2) although most foreign students arrive with positive images and attitudes toward the United States, these images affected by the mass media tend to become more negative, especially regarding social discrimination (Markham); and (3) foreigners bring with them images of the U.S. which they had obtained from the local media in their own countries (Maslog, Heath).[7]

The majority of these attitudinal studies focus solely on the phenomenon of attitudes and only a handful (Klein, Chang) seek to establish any relationship between attitudes and variables causing their formation.[8]

Klein, et al., found that more than half of the Asian students studied had not established significant social relationships with Americans during their stay; and, those who did not do so considered Americans insincere, superficial, and incapable of real friendships. Pratt suggests that the emotional problems of foreign students stem from an existent inability to adjust to the home cultural tradition and have little to do with educational travel or with the impact of an alien culture.[9] The inability to adjust to American values and "the American way of life" is more likely to be the neurosis of an

American student than that of a Japanese student. Chang found that attitudes of Chinese students toward the United States were positively related to the extent of association with Americans and to the foreign students' perception of America's relationship to his or her own country.[10]

Of relevance for the focus of this study is the fact that investigations of foreign student attitudes, by and large, have overlooked the role of channels of communication available to such students which enable them first to perceive and then conform to the American way of life. In addition, the research literature is also inadequate in investigating the social and other processes by which pressure is brought to bear upon foreign students to perceive and conform to the American way of life. In short, investigators have not focused on processes by which foreign students are acculturated to American values and the American society.

Acculturation Influences

The main socialization agencies in any society are: (a) the family, (b) the school, (c) mass communication, and (d) a complex of agencies dealing with the economic, political, religious, welfare, health, and recreational areas.[11] We will concern ourselves with comments on the first three agencies.

The family ordinarily is the first socializing influence in the life of the individual and for the most part is of the greatest formative importance. Obviously, in the case of the majority of

foreign students, this agency of socialization and acculturation does not play any significant role with respect to American values. If a foreign student has a host family, it may be the closest approximation to this first agency of socialization. However, the limited time most foreign students would spend with American hosts, precludes the latter from making any substantial contribution to the former's socialization. Of course, those foreign students who stay with host families all through their sojourn may gain a lot of information concerning American values, and this may, in the long run, help in their acculturation.

The second decisive socialization agency is the school. Here, there is a need to know about various attitudes and behavior: (1) the acceptance, rejection or isolation of foreign students on the part of fellow students; (2) the motivation and goals of foreign students in seeking American students' company; (3) the attitudes of teachers and administrators; and, (4) of course, the adequacy of physical facilities in the promotion of appropriate attitudes and behaviors.[12] Information in these areas, however, is woefully lacking.

Next come the mass communication media which also exert a socializing influence throughout life.[13] Melvin DeFleur describes at least three ways in which the media can potentially influence values.[14] First, mass communication content can reinforce existing patterns and lead people to believe that given social norms are being maintained by the society. Second, they create newly shared convictions with respect to topics with which the public has had little prior experience.

Third, they can change existing norms and one form of behavior to another.

Concerning the first potential, that of the media-norm relationship, Lazarsfeld and Morton maintained that the media operate conservatively and follow public norms in such matters as tastes and values, thereby reinforcing a status quo rather than creating new norms of significance or changing deeply institutionalized patterns.[15] This view has some merit even though the media continually attempt to influence us to change in essentially trivial matters--to buy new products, wear new clothing styles, or dance in different ways--they generally avoid posing a serious challenge to fundamental values or deeply established ways of doing things in a particular society.

At the same time, the media sometimes stimulate new forms of behavior that receive widespread social approval, thus, under certain circumstances, creating new cultural norms. DeFleur has cited a number of instances, including boys of every neighborhood becoming proficient in thumping their chests and emitting loud shrieks following the TV popularity of weekly serials featuring Tarzan.[16]

The issue, as to whether or not the media can convert people from one established form of behavior to another through altering their definition of the situation, remains a thorny one. Klapper, for instance, denies that media have much power to convert in well-established behavioral areas.[17] However, DeFleur warns that the research mind should not yet be closed on this issue. It may be that the media are capable of converting people from one value to another but refuse to

make any earnest effort to do so for fear of disturbing the status quo and annoying their sponsors whose distaste for instability only surpasses their aversion to uncertainty.

DeFleur's description of media influences on values must be restated when making application to the values of foreign students. In their case, the mass media role is confined to helping foreign students first perceive and later internalize or conform to American norms and values by way of reinforcing the perceived patterns and values.

The Socialization Process

In order to appreciate the action of these acculitvating agencies more clearly, a brief sketch of the process of socialization in any society is in order.

Socialization may be taken as the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable them to participate as more or less effective members of groups and society.[18] This process of learning has been conceptualized (a) in essentially behavioral and irrational terms with the individual being perceived as responding to, rather than initiating, social interaction and concommitant learning experiences, and (b) in sociological terms, with the individual making choices, seeking out new roles and deciding, as well as being unconsciously induced, to acquire new skills or alter existing behavior. An important fact about social learning is that it takes place in a social environment with the learner responding to stimuli from others around him and providing stimuli for those

responsible for socializing him.[19]

In this process of learning, the learner is likely to pay special attention to cues indicating that external sanctions are impending unless behavior is altered. However, as an individual gets older an increasing proportion of his behavior may become independent of external sanctions and be based instead on internalization.[20] External and internal sanctions emphasize the importance of the characteristics of settings in which socialization takes place, especially those features of the social environment that facilitate or inhibiting the learner's assessment of his own behavior and provide him with more or less explicit information concerning what is expected of him.[21]

Concerning foreign students in the United States, it may be stated that most of them come to this country to acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions with a view to participating as more effective members of the societies they have come from. Nevertheless, the fact cannot be overlooked that their education takes place in a social environment with the learner (in this case the foreign student) responding to stimuli from others around him although in the case of foreign students there may not be much stimuli provided to those attempting to socialize him. Foreign students, thus, during their sojourn in this country are called upon to play some socializing roles--even though in a limited way--and to do that successfully they have to perceive expectations related to those roles. They must also pay attention to sanctions, external as well as internal, which may be applied if behavior is not altered.

Obviously, foreign students require assistance from institutionalized mechanisms for teaching them how to play their roles. However, the

university or their major institutionalized mechanism can teach them primarily about roles associated with the academic life. For learning social roles and expectations associated with those roles they have to depend upon more informal institutions and informal cues.

The Problem

This study is an attempt to highlight the role of informal cues enabling foreign students to acquire a knowledge of American values and American society. Its scope is limited in the sense that the investigators are concerned only with the perception of, and conformity (as qualified in the study) to, American values by foreign students. There is no attempt to study the whole gamut of forces--economic, political, and cultural--acting in the socialization of foreign students, In a limited way, this study may be described as an attempt to highlight the role of the communication process in the acculturation of foreign students.

The study does not specify hypotheses because inadequate research in the area does not warrant a formal hypothesis-testing effort. It is a descriptive effort at finding a relationship between perception and conformity to values and social processes and channels of communication.

The investigators seek answers to such questions as: (a) How do foreign students come to perceive and conform to American values? (b) What are the chanels of mass, as well as interpersonal communication that enable them first to perceive and later to conform to

American values? (c) What, to foreign students, are credible sources of information concerning Americans and American society? (d) Are there any social pressures brought to bear upon foreign students to first perceive and then conform to American norms and values?

Definition of Terms

Perception of values in this study means the foreign students' knowledge of American values as reflected in their response to statements describing those values. Perception was measured by asking respondents to agree or disagree with statements about American values. If, for example, a respondent strongly agreed with one of the statements concerning American values--"On the whole, the American society is characterized by democratic procedures"--it means that he has accurately perceived an American value. A similar procedure was used to elicit a measure of the foreign student view of Americans as a people.

Conformity to values in this study is the degree to which respondents approve or disapprove of American values. In this case, an American value was described in a general statement such as "Parents should provide children with freedom" and respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed. It may be noted here that the term conformity in this study has been used with the investigator fully aware of the fact that the connotation of "behavior in accordance with . . . " is not associated with the term. "Internalization" might be a better term to use. However, internalization has other psychological and personality nuances inappropriate to this study, and since

the investigators did not attempt to measure those nuances "internalization" was dropped in favor of "conformity". In summary, the term "conformity" implies that a respondent indicates that the process of approving American values seems to have been initiated. Nor is conformity being used in the sense of conversion, because the researchers do not know respondents' attitudes toward American values prior to their arrival in the United States.

Channels of communication in the study refer to various possible means through which foreign students obtain information concerning American values, American society, and Americans. These means include channels of interpersonal communication, such as social contact and talk with other foreign students and Americans (teachers, host families, international student advisors), and channels of mass communication including TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, books, and movies.

Credible sources in this study mean persons or agencies regarded by foreign students as credible sources, in relative terms, of course, in informing them about Americans and American society. Source credibility was measured by asking respondents to indicate how credible they regard sources like TV, radio, newspapers, American friends in providing information about Americans and the American society.

Social pressures may be defined as any inducement which forces a respondent to conduct himself in a certain way during his or her sojourn in the United States. It was measured by asking respondents to indicate how often they keep American values and norms in mind in conducting themselves in this country, how much they are concerned

with disappointing their friends, teachers, and advisors if they do not conduct themselves in consistency with American values and norms.

Collection of Data and Questionnaire

Subjects for this study comprised foreign students studying at three universities--two public and one private--in central Illinois. Addresses of these students were obtained from student-faculty directories and a questionnaire was mailed to 500 randomly selected foreign students. In the case of the school whose foreign student office refused to cooperate, the faculty-student directory contained local addresses of students and questionnaires were sent to foreign students who listed addresses in their respective countries as their local addresses. Sixty percent responded (298 out of 500). In addition to the questionnaire, foreign students at the three schools were interviewed by the investigators and their assistants. Although students were not selected on the basis of countries, an attempt was made to include students from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe. Students from Canada were excluded from the list of prospective respondents on the assumption that American and Canadian cultures have a lot of similarity and that Canadian students should have no difficulty in perceiving American values and norms.

The questionnaire contained 27 statements describing American values and respondents were asked to respond to them on agree-disagree intensity scale of the Likert type. Some of the statements included: (a) A weakness of American society is the inability to get things

organized; (b) On the whole, the American society is characterized by democratic procedures.[22] Similarly the questionnaire continned 15 statements describing American values in general terms, e.g., "Parents should provide children with freedom," "Every society should provide its members with a high level of economic security." In this case, foreign students were asked to point out how much they agreed or disagreed with each of these statements. The third set of statements contained descriptions of Americans as a people, e.g., "Americans are generally quite religious." Prospective respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed. Efforts were made to include both negative as well as positive statements to protect the instrument from sensitizing effects. Statements were pre-tested for reliability in mass communication upper level undergraduate classes. Only those which had a "Difficulty score" of 0.80 or above were included in the questionnaire.

Foreign students were also asked: (1) How often they get together on social occasions with Americans and foreigners; (2) Which communication channels (mass media and both formal and interpersonal contacts) have helped them more in becoming better acquainted with Americans and American society; (3) Who among teachers, American friends, foreign friends, host families, etc., do foreign students consult about the American society; (4) Which channels (among mass media nad interpersonal) are more credible sources of information about Americans and American society; (5) How much are foreign students concerned about, and pressured to, conduct themselves in accordance with American values and norms?

In addition to the above questionnaire segments, the respondents were also asked to provide information regarding the time they spend as consumers of the mass media, their English language capability, and the duration of their stay in the United States.

Methodology

Three dependent variables--perception of values, conformity to American values, and perception of Americans--were created by computing the total score of a respondent on statements. Score five was assigned for a correct prediction and 1 for the incorrect.

A series of multiple regressions was performed to measure the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The independent variables included: social contact; knowledge of American society derived from mass media; from talks; from attending classes and meetings; from meetings with advisors; from consulting about American society; from having confidence in sources cnncerning information about the American society; from time spend on the mass media; from capability in understanding the English language; from keeping American values in mind; from concern about American values while conducting themselves in the United States; and from pressure to conduct themselves in consistence with American values.

The data was computed using the Subprogram CODE BOOK on Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

Accurate Perception of Values

One of the three dependent variables in this study was the accuracy

of perception of American values by foreign students. Among contact and talk variables, "Social contact with people from home countries," "talking with host families," and "talking with international student advisors" were found to be significant predictors of "the accuracy of perception of American values."

These results indicated: (a) those foreign students who received information about American values mainly from other foreign students and people from home countries had a less accurate perception of those values; and (b) foreign students who said host families had provided them with information about Americans and American society had a more accurate perception of American values. Similarly, foreign students who indicated they received information about Americans and American society from international student advisors could perceive American values relatively more accurately.

Among mass media variables, "a knowledge of Americans and American society gleaned from TV, books, and the radio" emerged as significant predictors of the accurate perception of American values. However, the radio variable had a negative correlation with the dependent variable, which indicated that a knowledge of Americans and American society received from the radio made foreign students perceive American values less accurately. Books and television, on the other hand, enabled respondents to predict American values relatively more accurately. The independent variable "consultation with American friends" also came out as a significant predictor of the accurate perception of American values.

As regards credible sources of information about Americans and the American society, American friends were singled out as a significant independent variable. This means that foreign students who cited American friends as a relatively credible source of information had high scores on "the accurate perception of American values" variable.

Other significant predictors of this dependent variable included "time spent in listening to stereo music;" "difficulty in following the English language as used by American friends, International student advisors, and the print medium;" and "students keeping American values in mind while conducting themselves." However, only in the case of "language and the print medium" and "keeping values in mind," was the correlation with the dependent variable in the direction of accurate perception. The negative correlation between "print medium and language" variable indicated that the less difficulty foreign students had in following English language used in newspapers and magazines, the more accurately they could perceive American values. The positive correlation between "keeping values in mind" and its relationship to "the accurate perception of values" pointed out that the more foreign students kept American values in mind while conducting themselves in the American society, the more successful they were at perceiving American values. The following table explains the findings in statistical detail:

Table 1

Perception of Values and Significant Independent Variables

Variables	Multiple R	R Square	Simple R	F
Social contact with home country people	0.16	0.03	-0.15	2.80 <.05
Social contact with foreigners	0.20	0.04	-0.17	3.85 <.05
Reading books	0.13	0.02	0.12	3.18 <.05
Watching TV	0.14	0.02	0.12	3.18 <.05
Listening to radio	0.20	0.04	-0.76	4.60 <.05
Talking to host families	0.20	0.03	0.12	2.95 <.05
Visiting international student office	0.13	0.02	0.13	4.80 <.05
Confidence radio	.09	0.008	-0.05	4.26 <.05
Confidence print	0.17	0.03	0.13	7.22 <.05
Consultation with American friends	0.17	0.03	0.17	8.02 <.05
Confidence in American friends	0.26	0.07	0.26	16.27 <.05
Listening to stereos	0.27	0.08	-0.21	2.24 <.05

Table 1 cont'd

Variables	Multiple R	R Square	Simple R	F
Difficulty following language of international student advisor	0.13	0.02	0.01	2.65 <.05
Difficulty following language in print medium	0.19	0.04	-0.10	5.61 <.05
Keeping values in mind	0.17	0.03	0.17	7.10 <.05

Conformity

Concerning the second dependent variable "conformity to American values," significant independent variables were "knowledge about Americans and the American society from TV," "knowledge from talks with people from home," "knowledge from talks with teachers," "knowledge from consulting with teachers as well as roommates," "confidence in teachers," "difficulty in following language used by teachers," and "consistency with American values before student advisors."[22]

These results indicate that:

--Foreign students who say that they receive relatively more information about Americans and American society from TV are in the process (or at least appear to be) of internalizing American values;

--Relatives and friends from the home country residing in the United States were cited by respondents as contributing to their conformity to American values;

--The more students receive information about Americans and American society, the more they seem to approve of American values;

--Knowledge about American society which foreign students obtained from attending meetings as well as shopping in supermarkets also provided a significant contribution to the internalization of values;

--The more foreign students consulted teachers and roommates when they had some questions to ask and clarifications to seek about American values, the more conformity to American values they indicated in their responses;

--Teachers as credible sources in informing students about Americans and American society contribute to the internalization of American values by foreign students;

--The less difficulty foreign students have in following the English language usage of teachers, the more they appear to be conforming to American values;

--The more concerned foreign students are to being consistent about American values so as not to disappoint their foreign student advisors, the more they appear to be in approval of American values.

Table 2

Conformity to Values and Significant Independent Variables

Variable	Multiple R	R Square	Simple R	F
Watching TV	0.18	0.03	0.17	6.64 <.05
Talk with people from home	0.11	0.01	0.10	3.62 <.05
Talk to teachers	0.18	0.03	0.13	3.21 <.05

Variable

Table 2 cont'd

Variable	Multiple R	R Square	Simple R	F
Attending meetings	0.14	0.02	0.14	3.88 <.05
Supermarkets	0.11	0.01	0.11	8.81 <.05
Consult roomates	0.16	0.03	0.09	2.101 <.05
Confidence talk with teacher	0.16	0.03	0.14	5.54 <.05
Difficulty following language used by teachers	0.11	0.01	-0.09	2.69 <.05
Consistency before student advisors	0.14	0.02	0.19	3.11 <.05
Confidence TV	0.17	0.03	0.16	3.16 <.05

Perception of Americans

The relationship between the dependent variable "perception of Americans" and the independent social contact and talk variables indicated that "social contact with other foreigners," "talk with American friends," "talk with other foreigners," "talk with roommates," and "talk with host families" were significant predictors of the dependent variable.

The direction of correlation in the case of the variables "social contact with other foreigners," "talk with foreigners," "talk with teachers," and "talk with host families" was negative. These results may be interpreted as follows:

--The more foreign students receive information about Americans and the American society from other foreigners, the less positive is their perception of Americans;

--The above outcome is further supported by the negative correlations between the dependent variable "perception of Americans" and the independent variables "talk with foreigners" and "roommates". This implies that these independent variables also contribute to a negative perception of Americans. The "talking with teachers" and "host families" variables, surprisingly, again contribute to a negative perception.

Other significant predictors of the "perception of Americans" included the independent variables "consultation with foreigners," "time spent in classes," "consultation with Americans," "consultation with host families," "time spent in listening to the radio and stereo music," "going to movies," "confidence in friends from home country," "confidence in American friends" and "host families," "difficulty in following the English language usage of American students, American teachers, newspapers and magazines," and "concern for disappointing American as well as foreign friends."

These results indicate:

--Consultation with foreign friends and roommates concerning Americans and the American society contribute to a negative perception of Americans by foreign students;

--Time spent in classes and listening to the radio also contributed to a negative perception of Americans;

--Talk and consultation with American friends helped foreign students to perceive Americans positively;

---Attending the movies contributed to the positive perception of Americans by foreign students;

--Whereas confidence in friends from home contributed to a negative perception, confidence in American friends and host families resulted in a positive perception of Americans;

--The less difficulty foreign students have in understanding the English language usage of American students, American teachers, newspapers, and magazines, the less negative does their perception of Americans become;

--The more concerned foreign students are that if their conduct is not consistent with American values they will disappoint American friends, the more positive is their perception of Americans. On the other hand, the more concerned they are about disappointing other foreign friends, the more negative is their perception of Americans.

Table 3

Perception of Americans and Significant Independent Variables

Variables	Multiple R	R Square	Simple R	F
Social contact with other foreigners	0.23	0.05	-0.22	14.68 <.05
Knowledge from listening to radio	0.19	0.04	-0.19	8.66 <.05
Talk with Americans	0.20	0.04	0.20	14.17 <.05
Talk with foreigners	0.24	0.06	-0.12	5.86 <.05
Talk with roommates	0.27	0.07	-0.04	2.64 <.05

Table 3 cont'd

Variables	Multiple R	R Square	Simple R	F
Talk with teachers	0.28	0.08	-0.07	2.91 <.05
Talk with host families	0.30	0.09	-0.10	3.14 <.05
Attending classes	0.10	0.01	-0.10	3.02 <.05
Language difficulty American students	0.09	0.007	-0.06	2.47 <.05
Language difficulty teachers	0.29	0.09	-0.20	5.81 <.05
Consistency of values: American friends	0.14	0.02	0.10	8.30 <.05
Consistency of values: foreign friends	0.20	0.04	-0.11	9.80 <.05
Consult teachers	0.08	0.006	-0.08	2.27 <.05
Consult American friends	0.21	0.04	0.17	13.00 <.05
Consult foreign friends	0.27	0.04	-0.08	2.27 <.05
Consult host families	0.27	0.07	0.09	3.20 <.05
Consult roommates	0.31	0.10	-0.10	8.10 <.05
Confidence in friends	0.12	0.01	0.12	3.88 <.05
Confidence home friends	0.21	0.04	-0.16	3.91 <.05

Table 3 cont'd

Variables	Multiple R	R Square	Simple R	F
Confidence host families	0.28	0.08	0.17	7.51 <.05
Hours reading papers, magazines	0.33	0.11	-0.33	3.81 <.05
Hours in movies	0.37	0.14	0.17	2.64 <.05
Hours in listening music	0.53	0.28	-0.15	6.78 <.05

Discussion

Foreign students learn a great deal more than the content to which they are exposed in the formal class setting. At the very least, their minor subject on an American campus is the study of Americans. Donld F. Roberts has said that, "Socialization is a process during which people . . . learn what to expect from the world and what the world expects from them."[24] By substituting the word "Americans" for "world" it is possible to appreciate the fact that the inescapable socialization of foreign students sharpens their ability to perceive American values accurately, leads them to conform (in the sense of internalizing) with some of these values, and shapes their perception of Americans. This study attempts to ascertain some of the forces of channels of socialization and the comparative strength and direction of those forces. In addition, it is almost impossible to comment on these data without musing about some of the "whys" of

the results and, of course, without suggesting future paths for research.

With regard to the accurate perception of American values, it is no surprise to discover that foreign students who have expanded contacts with Americans on and off campus, particularly to the point of actually consulting with them about puzzling aspects of American life, will enhance their knowledge of our national characteristics. The student's English language facility is, of course, an important factor not only in expanded personal communication but in the ability to derive information about values from the media, especially television and books.

One might hypothesize that the overwhelming music content of American radio stations and the inherent difficulty of understanding the lyrics of songs, whether broadcast or played on the student's stereo set, renders these two media channels useless in helping the foreigner's perception of American values. Perhaps the pop music fare of youth the world over speaks its own language without references to clear, national distinctions.

Again, it is not surprising that foreign students who see their American friends as credible sources of information also perceive American values more accurately. And, certainly, it should logically follow that students who are quite conscious of American values as they go about their daily lives will also be more accurate in perceiving American values.

The matter of foreign students actually conforming with American values is perhaps too strong and misleading an emphasis. For that

reason the qualifying term "internalizing" which suggests approval of American values is used in this discussion. Apparently, the knowledge which foreign students receive about Americans and American society from watching television plays a stronger role in internalizing American values than do their conversations with people from home, o other socializing activities such as meetings and shopping, even though these activities are also helpful. The force of the television medium might possibly lie in its superb ability to project uncomplicated supportive messages about America which command and hold the attention of the viewer. The second major "internalizing" channel seems to be teachers. Foreign students feel they are credible sources and as they consult with them and receive information about American society from them (particularly if the teacher's English usage is easy to understand) the students are inclined to be more approving of American values. Also, those students who are concerned about disappointing their special advisors if they do not conduct themselves in consistency with American social and cultural values, beliefs, and norms are also more likely to internalize such items.

Finally, whether foreign students think negatively or positively about Americans depends to a great extent on forces which isolate them. Again, English language skills are important here. High degrees of conversation and consultation with foreign friends in whom they have confidence and whom they do not wish to disappoint leads them to have negative views about Americans.

Interestingly, although talking with host families also leads to negative perceptions, consulting with them does not. This may simply mean that when a foreign student approaches a host family with a specific need for discussion his communication experience is more satisfying and consequently he perceives Americans generally in a more positive light. Consultation with American friends also has positive results.

Radio listening, again, results in a negative finding but movie attendance (not television) contributes to positive perceptions about Americans. Perhaps this points to the film's ability to present more three dimensional and, thus, more believable, more empathic characters than populate the television screen.

The socializing process that accompanies a foreign student's period of study in an American community is indeed a complex blend of forces which has an important impact on his impressions of this country and its people.

Conclusions

Social learning, according to Goslin, takes place in an interactional and cultural context that often is characterized by institutional mechanisms designed to facilitate acquisition by the learner of specific skills, dispositions, and values.[25] Once certain response capabilities have been established, maintenance and regulation of appropriate behavior patterns may occur either through continued exercise of externally imposed rewards and punishments, or as a

result of processes internal to the individuals, that may be considered to be a product of the original learning experience.

This study sought to highlight cues and sanctions which assist foreign students to: (a) perceive American values accurately and perceive Americans positively, and (b) conform to those values. Some of the conclusions this study reached are:

1. Among the channels of mass communication, television was cited as one of the cues which enable foreign students to perceive American values accurately. Television watching also emerged as a helpful agent in the internalization of those values by foreign students. Other helpful cues among the mass media variables which played a relatively stronger role in the accurate perception of American values were: (a) information about American society received through reading books and the ability to follow the English language usage in the print medium. Radio and stereo listening, on the other hand, ostensibly contributed to an inaccuracy of perception of American values and a negative perception of Americans. Confidence in the credibility of the print medium as a source of information about the American society was named as a helpful cue in the accurate perception of American values. Foreign students indicated TV watching as a credible source on which to base their internalization of American values.

2. Informal interpersonal cues which foreign students singled out as helpful in the accurate perception of values included: (a) consultation with American friends, and (b) talks with host families.

Social contact with people from the home country and with other foreigners contributed to a less accurate perception of those values. As regards the role of informal interpersonal communication cues in aiding foreign students to internalize American values, respondents cited consultation with roommates and people from home countries, and attending meetings as helpful. The talks and consultations with American friends and host families, and the ability to follow the language used by American students contributed to the positive perception of Americans.

3. Formal interpersonal communication cues helpful to foreign students included: visiting the international student office (for perception of values), talks with and confidence in teachers (for perception of values), talks with and confidence in teachers (for conformity and for positive perception of Americans), and a facility in understanding the language usage of teachers (for conformity).

4. Obviously, in the case of most foreign students there are no formal sanctions expediting the process of acculturation. However, the results indicated that concern for being consistent to American values so as not to disappoint American friends served as an internal sanction in helping foreign students to perceive American values more accurately. On the other hand, the lack of concern for consistency to American values in an effort to please foreign friends contributed to a less accurate perception. The attempt to keep American values in mind while conducting themselves in the United States also contributed to a less accurate perception of American values. The only pressure or sanction which appeared to have played a significant role in

internalization was the concern for consistency to American values in the presence of foreign student advisors.

Even though the place of interpersonal communication is still pre-eminent in social learning, the indirect cues emanating from mass media are a force helping to shape (either negatively or positively) the perceptions and inclinations of foreign students toward Americans. Obviously, many ideas occur to intrigue the media researcher. Why the apparent strength of print and television as positive socializing agents by contrast with the negative factors generated by the radio and and stereo media? Is it a matter of obscurity of the message overlaid on an intrusive musical bed? Or is there a stronger measure of involvement which lead the reader and viewer to more positive perceptions than those generated in the listener? The socialization milieu of the foreign student on an American campus is highly complex, and this study is but one attempt toward an initial investigation of a largely unresearched phenomenon.

Endnotes

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[3]Ibid., p. 22.

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[10]Chang, Ibid.

[11]Donald Young, "The Socialization of American Minority People," in David Goslin (ed), Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research, Chicago, Rand McNally, and Co.,1971, p. 1134.

[12]Ibid., p. 1135.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Melvin L. DeFleur, Theories of Mass Communication (New York, David McKay Company, Inc., 1973), p. 130.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid., p. 131.

[17]Goslin, "Introduction," p. 3.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Harriet L. Rheingold, "The Social and Socializing Infant," Daniel R. Miller, "Psychoanalytic Theory of Development: A Re-evaluation," in Goslin, Ibid.

[20]Justin Arongreed, "The Concept of Internalization," in Goslin, Ibid.

[21]Alex Inkeles, "Social Structure and Socialization," in Goslin, Ibid.

[22]"Statements Concerning American Values are Based on the Description of Major Value-Orientations," in Robin M. Williams, Jr., American Society: A Sociological Orientation (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1970), pp. 438-502.

[23]Conformity in this study is being used with a limited connotation. The usage of conformity has been explained under "conceptual and operational definition of terms," on pp. 10-11.

[24]Donald F. Roberts, "Communication and Children," in W. Phillips Davison, James Boylan, and Frederick T. C. Yu, Mass Media Systems and Effects, New York, Praeger, 1976, p. 162.

[25]Goslin, Ibid., p. 20.